

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-150 (canceled).

151. (Currently amended) A method including the following steps:

creating a secure container;

associating a first rule with the secure container, the first rule at least in part governing use of at least some of the secure container contents, the first rule at least in part specifying potential users or recipients of the secure container contents, the specification being based at least in part on a first class to which the potential users or recipients have been assigned;

sending the secure container to a first remote party;

the first remote party embedding a first content object in the secure container;

receiving a request for a content object from a potential user or recipient, the request specifying a desired class of rights management information;

determining that the first content object has rights management information associated with it that belongs to the desired class;

sending the secure container, including the embedded first content object, to the potential user or recipient;

evaluating a digital certificate associated with the potential user or recipient;

determining, based at least in part on the digital certificate, that the potential user or recipient has been assigned to [a]the first class; and

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based on the determination, and at least in part under control of the first rule, making at least some of the secure container contents available to the potential user or recipient.

152. (Previously Presented) A method as in Claim 151, further including:

the first remote party associating a second rule with the secure container, the second rule at least in part governing use of at least a portion of the secure container contents; and

the step of making at least some of the secure container contents available to the potential user occurring at least in part under control of the second rule.

153. (Currently Amended) A method as in Claim 151, further including:

assigning the potential user to the first class, the assignment being based at least in part on the potential user's use of content.

154. (Currently Amended) A method as in Claim 153 in which the assignment of the potential user to the first class is based at least in part on demographic information.

155. (Previously Presented) A method as in Claim 154, further including:

following the potential user's access to the secure container contents, generating an audit trail describing an aspect of the access and providing the audit trail to a remote site.

Claims 156-185 (Canceled).

186. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 151, in which the desired class of rights management information comprises rights management information specifying predefined limitations on redistribution of content.

187. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 151, in which the desired class of

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rights management information comprises rights management information specifying predefined limitations on modification of content.

188. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 151, in which the desired class of rights management information comprises rights management information specifying predefined limitations on the cost of acquiring content.

189. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 151, in which the desired class of rights management information comprises rights management information specifying predefined limitations on the reporting of information regarding usage of content.

190. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 151, in which the steps of evaluating a digital certificate associated with the potential user or recipient and determining, based at least in part on the digital certificate, that the potential user or recipient has been assigned to [a]the first class, are performed before the step of sending the secure container, including the embedded first content object, to the potential user or recipient.

191. (Currently Amended) A method including the following steps:

 creating a secure container;

 assigning a potential user or recipient to a class, the assignment being based at least in part on information regarding the potential user or recipient's previous use of content;

 associating a first rule with the secure container, the rule at least in part governing use of at least some of the secure container contents, the first rule at least in part specifying potential users or recipients of the secure container contents, the specification being based at least in part on the class to which the potential users or recipients have been assigned;

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sending the secure container to a first remote party;
the first remote party embedding a content object in the secure container;
sending the secure container, including the embedded content object, to the potential user or recipient;
evaluating a digital certificate associated with the potential user or recipient;
determining, based at least in part on the digital certificate, that the potential user or recipient has been assigned to [a]the class; and
based on the determination, and at least in part under control of the first rule, making at least some of the secure container contents available to the potential user or recipient.

192. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 191, in which the information regarding the potential user or recipient's previous use of content comprises information regarding the type of rights management information associated with content items the potential user or recipient has previously used.

193. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 191, in which the information regarding the potential user's previous use of content comprises information regarding the type of content the potential user or recipient has previously used.

194. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 191, in which the information regarding the potential user or recipient's previous use of content is received from a second remote party, the second remote party having collected the information from the potential user or recipient.

195. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 191, in which the steps are performed in the order recited.

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